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ENGINEER-SPEAK NEEDS ROAD SIGNS

Staff writers Katie Nelson, Kerry Fehr-Snyder, Art Thomason and Chris Ramirez contributed to this report.

Phoenix City Councilman Greg Stanton doesn't exactly buy an analysis that shows local traffic loads in Ahwatukee Foothills will get better, not worse, if the South Mountain Freeway is built along Pecos Road.

"Sometimes, with the street engineers, I just don't know what they do. They have their own language. (But) they have a PE (professional engineer) beside their names, too."

Stanton, who represents Ahwatukee, was reminded that as an attorney, he has a JD (doctor of jurisprudence) behind his name.

"I don't know if that helps or hurts when it comes to common sense," he quipped.

Hallman yucks it up, counts on Cardinals gallows humor

Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman couldn't resist taking a playful swipe at Glendale during his State of the City address on Nov. 15. He cracked not one, not two, but three jokes at Glendale's expense regarding one of the West Valley city's newest acquisitions: The Cardinals.

In his first joke, Hallman jabbed at the football team's atrocious record: It went something like this:

Being the Cardinals is a little like being a corpse at a funeral. Everybody is partying, and you're not really having a good time.

The second got the most laughs: How do Cardinals fans teach their kids how to count? One; one and one; one and two; one and four; one and eight...

The third pointed out a makeshift acronym for the new Cardinal's stadium name: U-PIG. (For University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale.)

"When they lose, you know what to shout," Hallman said, grinning.

Arizona has since won another game, bringing its record to 2-8. The Cards play at Minnesota on Sunday. The 4-6 Vikings are on a four-game losing streak.

Mitchell 'overwhelmed' during visit by former Pres. Clinton

It was only days before the election, so he was probably sleep deprived.

Regardless, Harry Mitchell was downright giddy and a little silly when Bill Clinton came to town to stump for Mitchell. When a reporter asked Mitchell about Clinton's speech and if any portion of his message stood out, this was Mitchell's response:

"You know, I was listening," he said, not too convincingly, "but... I was just mesmerized by everything. It was just, what am I to be on the same stage as him? "I taught government in high school for 28 years. And here I am introducing, you know, an ex-president and on the same stage as him. I was overwhelmed."

Mesa's Walters strays the course in use of haunting catch-phrase

At the annual Mesa City Council retreat, the setting was relaxing and there was no talk of the war in Iraq.

Not directly, until Vice Mayor Claudia Walters uttered the unpopular war-effort phrase used by the Bush administration.

"Maybe we want to stay the course," Walters said of maintaining certain city services.

She was quick to correct herself.

"I don't think that I want to use that phrase right now," she said.

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